

2008 City of Wichita Fire Department Annual Report



2 Fire Stations Map

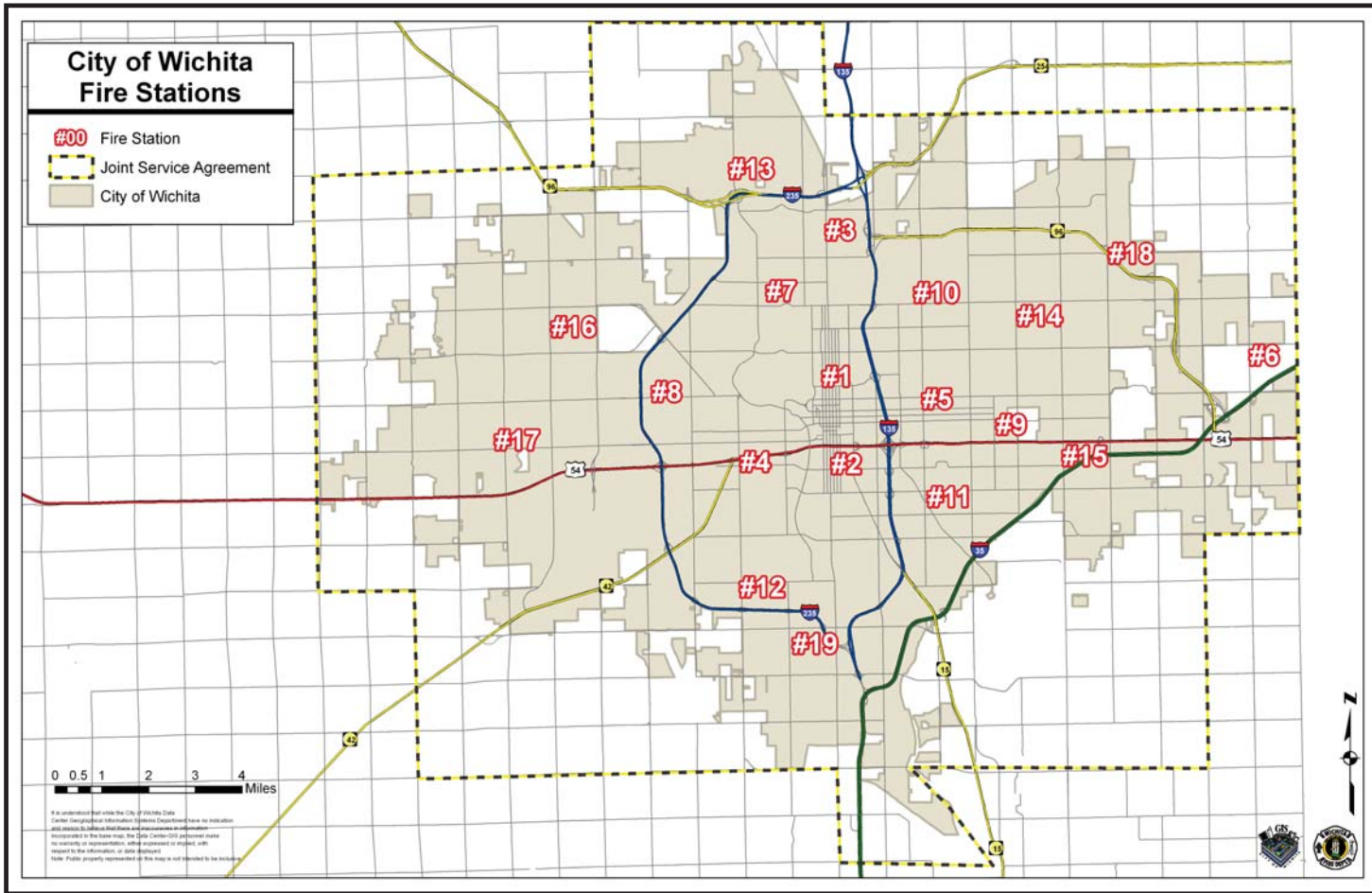


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(click on "Fire Department")

The mission of the Wichita Fire Department is to minimize the loss of life and property resulting from fires, medical emergencies and other disasters.

Wichita residents:

The year 2008 was an exciting time for the Wichita Fire Department. Wichita's Bravest were recognized on the local, state and national levels. The Fire Department broke ground on three very important fire station construction projects that will allow us to better serve the community for years to come. Station 20, 21 and 22 will be strategically located throughout the city and are scheduled to open in 2009. The department also initiated plans for construction of a long desired state-of-the art Regional Training Center to serve Wichita and our partners from throughout the Midwest. In addition, the department finished a strategic plan to help chart a direction as well as identify ways to improve service, enhance firefighters and make the best use of our new and existing resources.

Community Risk Reduction activities were provided across the City. Members of the department were present at a host of community and neighborhood events providing fire safety information, connecting with kids, as well as addressing other issues of community concern. We made great strides in our effort to provide an all-hazards approach to emergency response. Our Special Operations (High Angle Rescue, Under Water Recovery and Hazardous Materials Mitigation) proved their mettle at several high profile incidents. Training was provided in record numbers. Multiple recruit classes graduated and the newest of the Bravest were assigned at locations throughout the City. A renewed interest was placed on partnerships highlighted by a new four year curriculum at Northeast Magnet High School designed to expose high school students to emergency service careers.

The Wichita Fire Department has a rich tradition of outstanding public service. Our future is very bright and our commitment to you and your safety is unwavering. We are very appreciative of your support and that of the Mayor and City Council. It is indeed, a privilege to serve you!

"I would like to extend a special thank you to the Mayor, City Council, and City Manager for all of the support provided to "Wichita's Bravest" in 2008, as we worked together to provide a safe community.

I also want to recognize the many City Departments whose employees regularly provide assistance that has been so very helpful to the Fire Department."

Ronald D. Blackwell
City of Wichita Fire Chief



Fire Chief
Ronald D. Blackwell

4 Emergency Operations Division



Deputy Chief
Mike Rudd

Deputy Chief Mike Rudd leads the Emergency Operations Division. He oversees the personnel responsible for the delivery of emergency medical first response and fire protection services to the City of Wichita. Emergency Operations also supports surrounding departments with emergency services when requested.

The Wichita Fire Department's (WFD) Hazardous Materials Response Team, operating from Station 10, responds to fires and other emergencies which involve hazardous materials. The Team provides the technical expertise and equipment needed to safely mitigate hazardous materials emergencies. The Hazardous Materials Response Team is part of the Wichita-Sedgwick County Hazardous Materials Task Force which includes members from Sedgwick County Fire District 1, City of Wichita Environmental Services and the Sedgwick County Health Department. This Task Force responds county-wide to any hazardous materials emergency.

Hazardous Materials RESPONSE TEAM



Wichita's Bravest- Serving You

- Senior Command Staff
- Specialty Teams
 - Officers/
Firefighters

On March 12, 2008 the Wichita Fire Department Hazardous Materials Team responded to a tractor-trailer crash at K-96 and Hydraulic that involved a loaded, pressurized butane tanker. The tanker rolled over on the Interstate, dislodged itself from the tractor, slid between two bridge abutments and landed on the roadway below. Crews were on scene for more than 24 hours to control the incident which resulted in no serious injuries and minimal loss to area businesses.



photo: Mark Baker



photo: Mark Baker

Technical RESCUE TEAM



photo: Craig Hacker



photo: Mark Baker



craigHACKER

photo: Craig Hacker

On September 13, 2008 five residents and three Wellington, KS Firefighters became trapped on the Chikaskia River. Severe flooding had turned the 30 foot wide stream into a 200 foot wide drowning machine. Wellington Firefighters had capsized their boat during an earlier rescue attempt. Despite their heroic efforts, the raging river took the life of one of their own. Dispatchers called the highly skilled Wichita Fire Department Rescue Team members for assistance. The Team responded and battled the massive river saving those eight lives.

6 Fire Prevention Division



Fire Marshal
Ed Bricknell

Fire Prevention Personnel-
Fire Marshal
Fire Investigation Unit
Public Education Unit
Fire Code Enforcement

Wichita Fire Marshal Ed Bricknell leads the Fire Prevention Division. Prevention efforts are an essential and effective strategy that minimizes death and property loss in the community. The Fire Marshal oversees prevention activities that includes; code administration, community risk reduction programs, public education and fire investigation.



Fire Investigation

The Wichita Fire Department Fire Investigation Unit (FIU) responds to all significant structure fires. Incident Commanders on the scene determine if an investigator is needed based on guidelines including: if there are indications the fire was intentionally set, if there are serious injuries, if the fire loss will be more than \$25,000, or if the on-scene crews cannot clearly identify the cause of the fire.

In 2008 the FIU made 44 arson arrests, bringing the arson clearance rate to 53%. This was a significant improvement from the previous year, and continued to outpace national standards of about 22%.

Fire Investigation Unit

244 scene investigations
\$13 million in structure/content damages
6 fatalities
37 civilian injuries

K-9 Jodie's Career Stats

- Jodie was deployed in 330 structure fires with a 96% accuracy rate in detecting accelerants
- 60 cases resulted in a felony arrest
- Jodie assisted with 132 community risk reduction programs

In December, Jodie was replaced by Bella a two year old black lab retriever.

Fire Investigator Brad Crisp with fire investigation K-9s Jodie (left) and Bella (right)



Public Education/ Code Administration

The WFD Public Education Unit provided 386 programs in 2008. The programs included safety talks, puppet programs, fire extinguisher training, fire drills and other life safety programs. During Fire Prevention Week, the WFD delivered 6 major programs reaching more than 4,000 children and adults.



photo: Kelly Ross

Fire Loss Awareness for Safer Homes (F.L.A.S.H.). In 2008, the WFD revived the F.L.A.S.H. program in which firefighters visited neighborhoods where fires had recently taken place. They made contact with residents, distributed fire prevention information and performed home inspections.



Code Administration is used to reduce the number of fire deaths, injuries, number of fires and subsequent property loss. This is accomplished through proactive code enforcement designed around compliance as opposed to punitive measures.

Inspection Activities:

- Commercial/Industrial inspections
- New Fire Alarm/Sprinkler System plan reviews
- Sprinkler System/Fire Alarm inspections
- Follow-up inspections



8 Support Services Division



Deputy Fire Chief
Ronald L. Aaron

Deputy Chief Ron Aaron leads the Support Services Division. He oversees support activities that promote improved operational safety and service effectiveness. Providing emergency response requires crews to be properly trained, equipped and deployed. Activities must be performed safely, properly recorded and continually evaluated.

Support Services provides:

- Occupational health and safety
- Fire & medical service training
- Record management
- Data analysis
- Performance measurement and review
- Quality assurance and quality improvement
- Technology development
- Communication improvement
- Budget development
- Strategic planning

Support Personnel-
Commissioned Officers
Civilian Support Staff

Technology

The Wichita Fire Department (WFD) continues to increase reliance on technology. The City Information Technology (IT) Department provides staff support for WFD technology needs. This includes one full-time Geographic Information System Analyst and 1/2 time System Analyst for FireHouse records. Some IT initiatives in 2008 include:

- A new Computer Aided Dispatch (CAD) program was added to over 80 mobile computer terminals in the Fire Department's fleet.
- Fire data collection and processing to work with the new CAD system.
- Fire and IT staff increased their knowledge base by attending a FireHouse database application convention.
- Numerous reports are created monthly to support the Department's mission for each of the six City Council Districts. The reports highlight a previous month's call response with a map overview of the district.
- Secured wireless internet connection on the Wichita Fire Department floor at City Hall.



Fire Department engine with mobile computer terminal

Fire Department Records

The WFD uses the ACS FireHouse record management system to manage critical information. Annually more than 68,000 unit response records are coded with Computer Aided Dispatching (CAD) response benchmarks directly from the 911 Center. Once the 911 information is entered into the system, response personnel record their unit activities associated with each response. Records are checked for accuracy and completeness. Completed reports are sent monthly to the State Fire Marshal's Office.

Training activities, code administration activities, equipment inventories, and other administrative information is also maintained in FireHouse RMS. Records staff maintain the record system, manage administrative security and employee permissions. They also provide support and training to officers in the field and work closely with the IT Department.

The records management team is dedicated to helping manage business, day-to-day operations & planning, field operations & record support, communications, and assisting with technical challenges. The records team understands that combining quality records with a powerful records management system is key to supporting continuous service improvement and providing a safe and secure community.

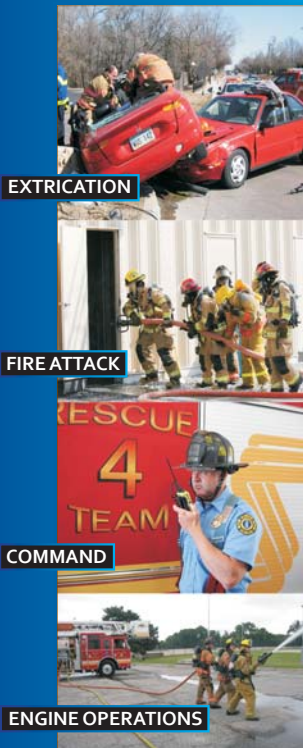


Anita Walker and Sally Griffith work on FireHouse record development.

Safety/Training Mission-

- Continue to provide improved safety and efficiency for members of the Wichita Fire Department
- Research and develop best practice models
- Utilize members of the WFD to assist with continuing education
- Solicit input from the rank and file
- Embrace technology and use it to our advantage
- Provide a sound learning environment that encourages members to participate

Training Provided



Continually enhance the safety and efficiency of the Department through training and support activities



Safety & Training

The calendar year of 2008 was a busy year with numerous classes taught by the Safety/Training Division. Topics were diverse but carried the main theme of firefighter safety. Early in the year we were honored to host Ronald Siarnicki, the Director of the National Fallen Firefighters Foundation. As a result of that meeting the Wichita Fire Department made an unprecedented commitment to Firefighter Safety.



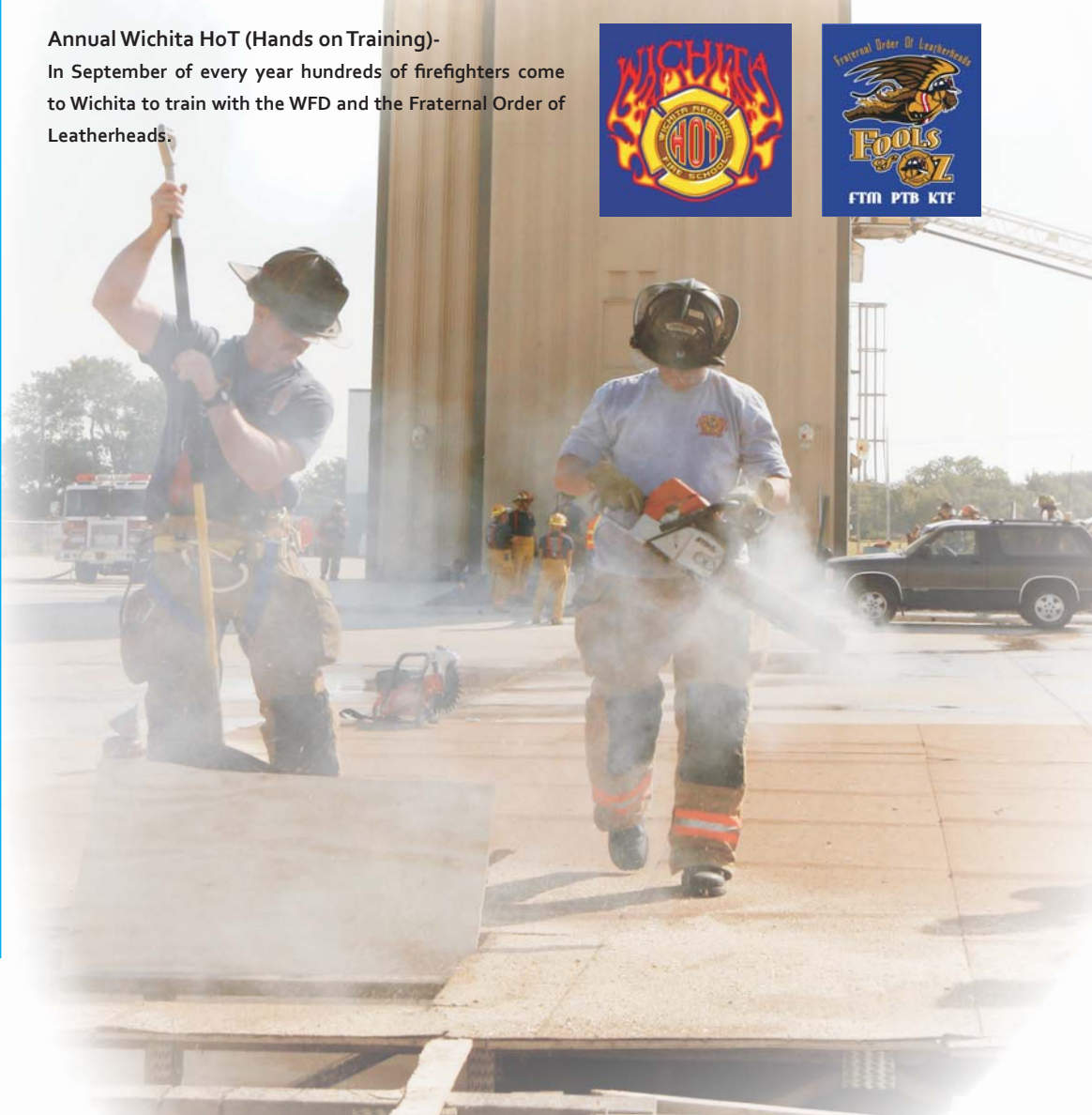
The International Association of Firefighters and Local #135 assisted in the safety effort and provided the Frontline Safety program to the Department. This year, efforts were directed at changing the Wichita Fire Department culture into a "safety first" culture.

The safety commitment included the adoption of the 16- Life Safety Initiatives, signing of the National Seatbelt Pledge, attending the Courage to be Safe program, and teaching members the meaning of risk analysis.

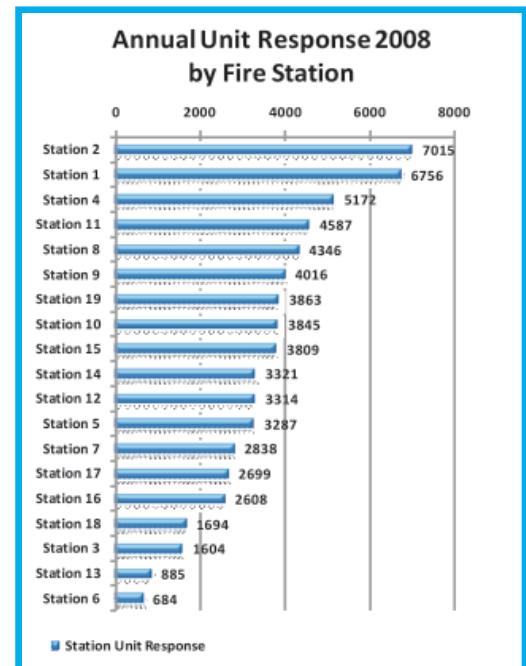
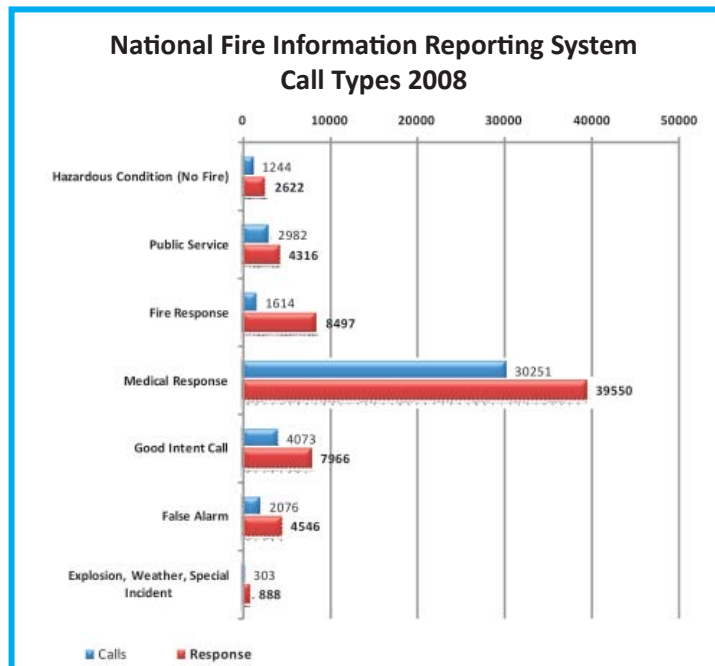
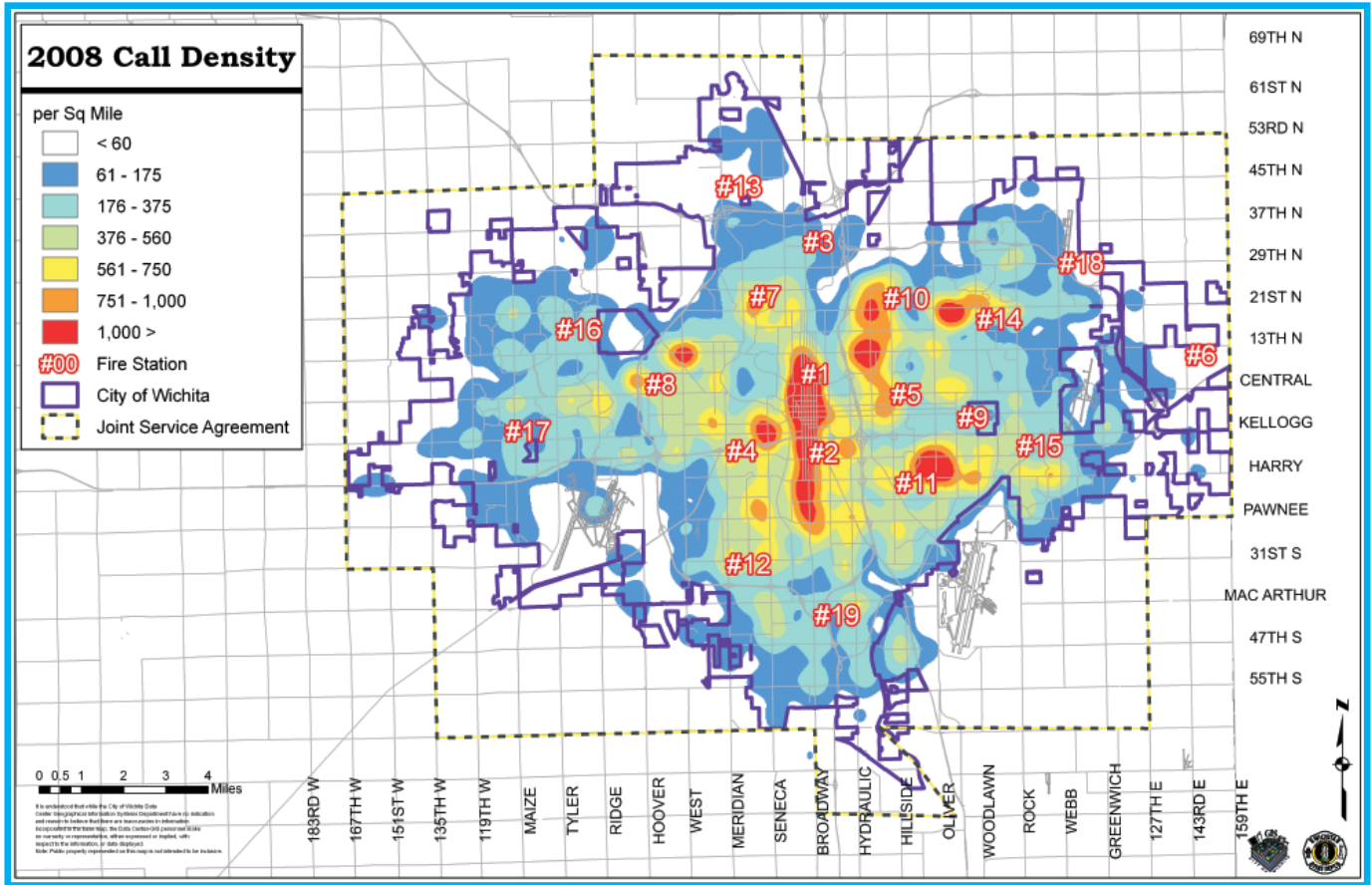


Annual Wichita HoT (Hands on Training)-

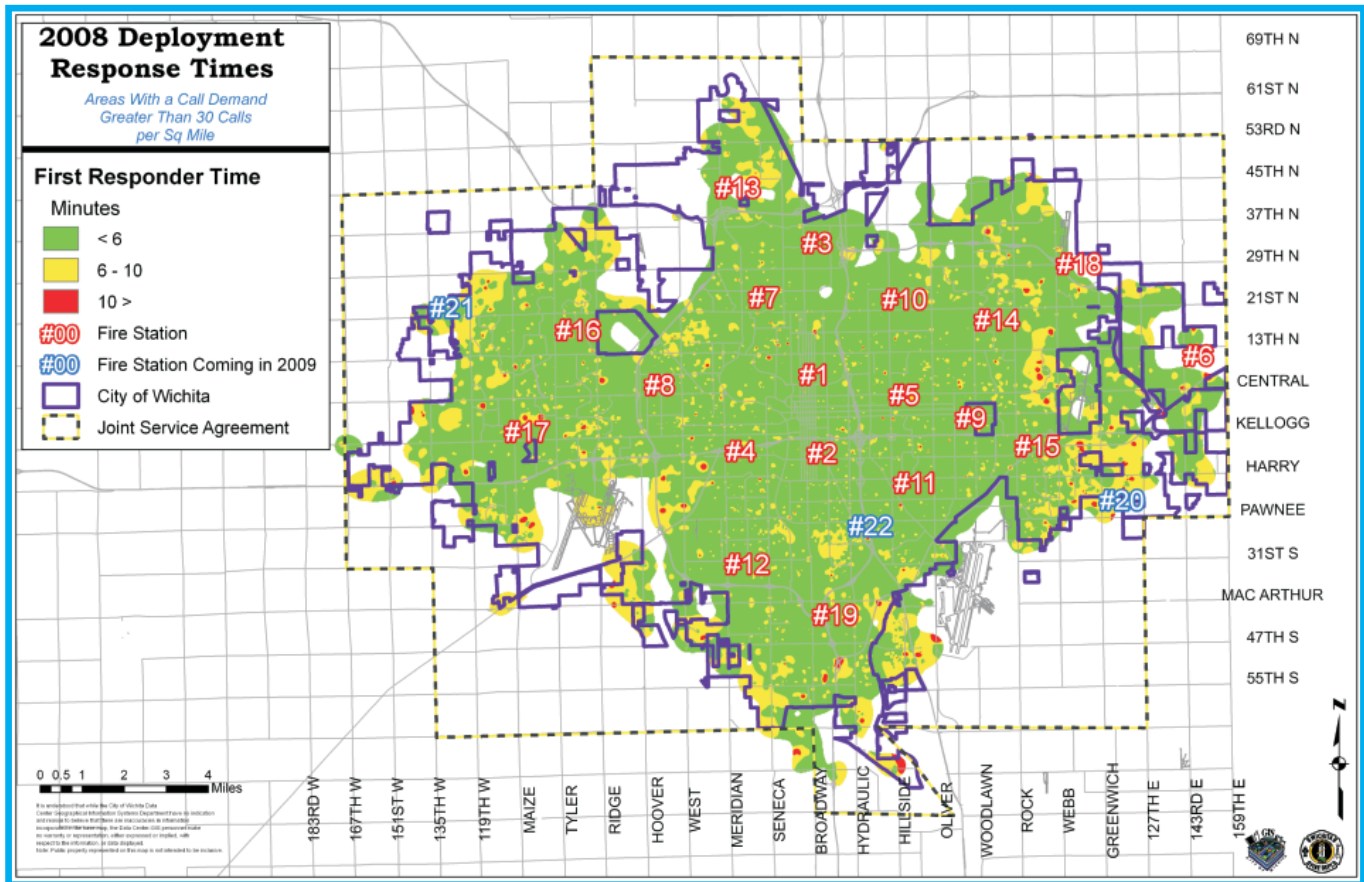
In September of every year hundreds of firefighters come to Wichita to train with the WFD and the Fraternal Order of Leatherheads.



10 Statistical Information



The chart on the left shows the type of calls creating WFD response. All calls require a one unit response, while others may require two or more units. The chart on the right shows the distribution of response for each fire station.

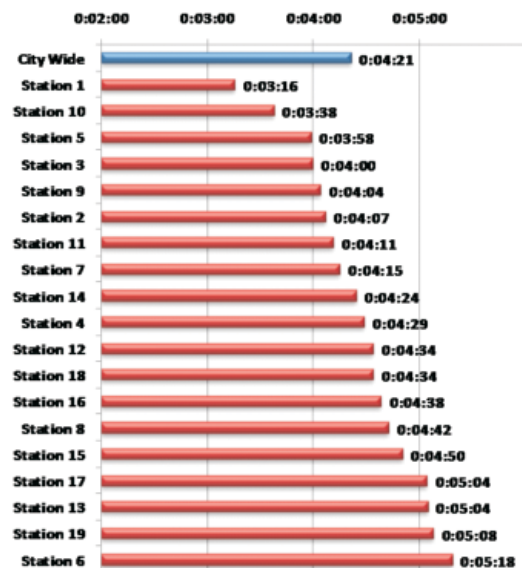


Selected Historical Fire Statistics

Category	2008	2007	2006
Total Number of Fires	1,679	1,600	2,175
Total Actual Fire Loss*	\$16,545,837	\$18,271,789	\$13,867,732
Number Residential Fires	389	508	542
Residential Fire Loss*	\$7,942,809	\$9,049,396	\$9,328,685
Number Vehicle Fires	336	314	338
Vehicle Fire Loss*	\$1,378,501	\$1,092,156	\$908,085
Average Fire Loss*	\$9,855	\$11,420	\$6,376
Total Number of Alarms	42,931	41,834	41,065
Flame Damage Confined to Room of Origin	365	309	340
Flame Damage Beyond Room of Origin	90	139	131
Number of Civilian Injuries	29	37	38
Number of Civilian Deaths	6	8	8
Number of Firefighter Injuries	48	30	44
Number of Firefighter Deaths	0	0	0

* not adjusted for inflation

2008 Average Response Time by each Primary Service Area



The table on the left shows historical response information. The chart on the right shows response performance in each station's primary service area.

12 Awards/Honor Guard

The Wichita Fire Department received national recognition in Firehouse Magazine's annual heroism edition. The Magazine honored 33 of Wichita's Bravest. These firefighters put their lives at risk during a variety of incidents including a shooting involving a Wichita Police Officer, severe flooding and rescues involving people trapped in house fires. In addition, the Department received an award for securing pet oxygen masks in an effort to improve the survival rate of pets.



Firehouse Award

ARGONIA SWIFT WATER RESCUE: Deputy Chief Mike Rudd, Kenneth D. Ast, Fire Captain; Jim D. Martin, Acting Battalion Chief; Steven D. Freeman, Fire Lieutenant; as well as Francisco Banuelos, Brady J. Bergman, Daniel A. Clark, Aaron E. Hall, Scott J. Kleinschmidt, Ralph D. Leddy and Micah S. Harris, Firefighters

BOSTON STREET HOUSE FIRE RESCUE: Jeremy Menges, Matt Angell, Firefighters

ERIE STREET HOUSE FIRE RESCUE: Greg Reed, Fire Captain; Pat Everton, Micah Hoelscher and Shane Toney, Firefighters

MAIZE ROAD RESCUE: Mark Baker and Greg Myrtle, Fire Captains; Vern Rohlman, Fire Lieutenant; Ken Ast, Jr. and Dan Clark, Firefighters

DAVIDSON STREET HOUSE FIRE RESCUE: Urban Eck, Fire Captain; Rusty Schneider, Lieutenant; Cy Omo, Firefighter

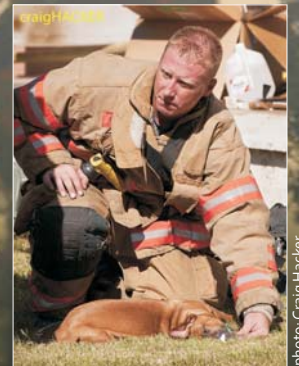
AID TO WOUNDED POLICE OFFICER: Jerrod Byrne, Daniel Houser, Meredith Dowty and Larry Cook, Firefighters; Terry Gresham, Darren McClintock, Acting Fire Lieutenants; David N. Powell, Fire Captain

Community Service Award

Joseph F. Couey, Shift Commander

Honor Guard

The Wichita Fire Department Honor/Color Guard is comprised of seventeen members, including one Unit Commander and two Lieutenant Commanders. Of these seventeen members, sixteen are active firefighters. The seventeenth member is retired from the Wichita Fire Department. The Honor/Color guard has been active since 1983. We are supported through a partnership between the Wichita Firefighters Relief Association, IAFF Local #135, and the Wichita Fire Department.



Pet resuscitation mask

photo: Craig Hacker



photo: Craig Hacker